2016 Regular Session

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 122

BY REPRESENTATIVE HUNTER

VOTERS/VOTING: Requests the governor of La. to take action to restore voting rights to those in the state who are under an order of imprisonment for conviction of a felony and to work with all stakeholders to ensure more accessibility to voting for those persons who are incarcerated and eligible to vote

1	A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION
2	To urge and request the governor of Louisiana to take action to restore voting rights to those
3	in the state who are under an order of imprisonment for conviction of a felony and
4	to work with all stakeholders to ensure more accessibility to voting for those persons
5	who are incarcerated and eligible to vote.
6	WHEREAS, voting is a civic duty of paramount importance; and
7	WHEREAS, the right to vote is protected by the Constitution of the United States of
8	America and the Constitution of Louisiana; and
9	WHEREAS, Article I, Section 10 of the Constitution of Louisiana provides that the
10	right to vote may be suspended while a person is under an order of imprisonment for
11	conviction of a felony; and
12	WHEREAS, the Louisiana Election Code prohibits a person from registering to vote
13	and provides for the suspension of a person's voter registration so long as the person is
14	serving a sentence of confinement for conviction of a felony, whether or not suspended,
15	whether or not the subject of the order has been placed on probation, with or without
16	supervision, and whether or not the subject of the order has been paroled; and
17	WHEREAS, a person who is incarcerated in an institution inside or outside the parish
18	in which he is qualified to vote but who is not under an order of imprisonment for conviction
19	of a felony may vote; and

1	WHEREAS, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, Louisiana has the highest
2	imprisonment rate in the country; and
3	WHEREAS, using 2010 Census data, the Prison Policy Initiative calculated
4	incarceration rates by race and found that African Americans are overrepresented in
5	Louisiana prisons and jails; and
6	WHEREAS, it is important that each eligible Louisiana citizen be able to exercise
7	his right to vote; and
8	WHEREAS, the Voting Rights Act, signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson
9	on August 6, 1965, aimed to overcome legal barriers that prevented African Americans from
10	exercising their right to vote; and
11	WHEREAS, the Voting Rights Act was a landmark piece of federal legislation that
12	ended racial discrimination in voting, enforcing the voting rights for all that are guaranteed
13	by the 14th and 15th Amendments; and
14	WHEREAS, the hard work, determination, and perseverance of civil rights activists
15	across the country helped to make this possible; and
16	WHEREAS, the victory of the Voting Rights Act helped in diversifying the
17	electorate and legislative bodies in government, making these bodies more representative;
18	and
19	WHEREAS, it is important to recognize the immeasurable value one vote can have;
20	and
21	WHEREAS, Terence R. McAuliffe, Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia,
22	recently issued an order restoring the right to vote for individuals who have completed the
23	terms of incarceration and supervised release for any and all felony convictions; and
24	WHEREAS, Governor McAuliffe has pledged going forward to issue monthly orders
25	restoring rights; and
26	WHEREAS, the Louisiana governor is authorized by the Constitution of Louisiana
27	to grant reprieves and under certain circumstances to commute sentences, pardon those
28	convicted of offenses against the state, and remit fines and forfeitures imposed for such
29	offenses.

1	THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby
2	urge and request the governor of Louisiana to take action to restore voting rights to those in
3	the state who are under an order of imprisonment for conviction of a felony and to work with
4	all stakeholders to ensure more accessibility to voting for those persons who are incarcerated
5	and eligible to vote.
6	BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitable copy of this Resolution be transmitted
7	to the governor of Louisiana.

DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

HCR 122 Engrossed

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Hunter

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